



Fruit and veg breaks in your classroom

A fruit and veg break is a chance for children to enjoy fruit and vegetables and make it a normal, easy part of everyday. The timing of your break will depend on your school's timetable and the needs of your students. All classrooms may have their fruit and veg break at a set time throughout the school. Alternatively, individual teachers may choose a time of day that suits them, for example:

- During lesson transition times e.g. between literacy and numeracy sessions
- As a break during the longest teaching block
- As a 'settling down' period e.g. after daily PE or when students return from lunch
- During a period when work does not stop e.g. during silent reading.

What to include in a fruit and veg break?

- Decide as a school what fruit and vegetables will be allowed e.g. fresh, canned or dried.
- It can be easier to encourage only fresh fruit and vegetables from the start.
- Avoid confusion and let families know what you are doing and why. Use the following table as a guide:

Encouraged	Not encouraged
<p>Fruit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All fresh fruit ✓ Fruit canned in natural juice/ no added sugar ✓ Dried fruit* <p>Vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All fresh vegetables ✓ All canned vegetables e.g. corn or baby corn <p>* Dried fruit is high in natural sugar and tends to stick to teeth, encourage fresh fruit whenever possible</p>	<p>Drinks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Fruit or vegetable juice ✗ Fruit flavoured cordial or mineral water <p>Foods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Fruit leathers, Roll-Ups® or fruit sticks ✗ Fruit lollies e.g. jubes ✗ Fruit jams or jellies ✗ Fruit or vegetable breads, pies or cakes ✗ Fruit canned in syrup ✗ Potato crisps, vegetable chips or hot chips ✗ Popcorn

More ideas

- Use small plastic containers at the side of the room for each child to place their fruit and veg at the start of the day. This avoids rummaging in bags and potential time wasting.
- Encourage parent support by asking students to bring easy to eat or pre-cut fruit or vegetables from home.
- Once a term or on special occasions have a shared platter with fruit and vegetables brought from home.

Move Well Eat Well

Think about how your school will support students that may not have access to fruit and vegetables at home or forget to bring them. Think about:

- The School Association donating funds for the yearly purchase of fruit and vegetables.
- Collecting a small annual parent fruit and vegetable levy that can be used to purchase fruit and vegetables for students from the school canteen.
- Organising a local grower or supplier to donate fruit and vegetables or offer them at a discounted price to families.
- Encouraging families that grow their own fruit and vegetables to donate any excess or using produce from the school garden.
- Having fruit and vegetables available from the school canteen.

If you are asking children to share fruit and veg from a platter, don't forget:

- Allergy issues
- Hygiene e.g. using small plastic tongs

Tips for teachers

- Develop a set of classroom rules, so that each student knows what is required of them. Include hygiene practices, what fruit and vegetables are allowed and acceptable behaviour.
- Encourage all students to participate, but do not force reluctant students.
- Every now and then encourage discussion about fruit and vegetables, for example where they are grown, what they taste like etc. Take the break beyond simply "refuelling" to appreciating, trying, comparing and researching fruit and vegetables.
- Create excitement and be a good role model by showing students that you enjoy eating fruit and vegetables too.
- Find ways to link your fruit and veg break in with the classroom curriculum.
- Keep a bin with a lid in the classroom for students to add their fruit and vegetable scraps. Transfer to the school compost bin, worm farm or chickens at the end of the school day.